

Lake Idlewild Park/Access Site Development Plan Summary of DNR Presentation from the June 25, 2008 Open House

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR), as a member of the Idlewild Transformation Initiative Team is committed to supporting and assisting the Idlewild Community. The Idlewild Transformation Initiative was created last year, bringing together key stakeholders at the local, county and state levels to assist Yates Township citizens and property owners in preserving, restoring and developing Idlewild. Please visit www.michigan.gov/idlewild

As an active member, the DNR has responded to the needs of the Idlewild community by:

- assisting with trash abatement
- restoring the skid pier on Williams Island
- providing research documents regarding the fish quality in Lake Idlewild
- networking with DNR Conservation Officers regarding fish, wildlife, and hunting issues.
- responding to community residents' interest in safe public access to the lake, need for an accessible fishing pier, toilets and drinking water.
- providing a Grants Workshop specifically for Idlewild community members.
- created the Idlewild Transformation Initiative website, www.michigan.gov/idlewild

Over 40 years ago the State of Michigan DNR purchased approximately 10 acres of land, which was dedicated for public access use. These parcels were located along and near the eastern shoreline of Lake Idlewild in Lake County. Recently, when the DNR became actively involved in the Idlewild Transformation Initiative, community members expressed an interest in having increased public access to the lake, and a small low impact park area.

In early 2007 two meetings were held with community residents to discuss community interests and needs as related to the undeveloped parcels of land. At the first meeting, residents identified their needs. Many residents also sent letters. Several weeks later, DNR staff again met with community members, and presented a draft plan; the Idlewild Park/Access Site Development Plan. On April 1, 2007 this plan was submitted to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) in the form of a grant application. On December 6, 2007, the grant application was approved by Governor Granholm and the Natural Resources Trust Fund Commission for \$324,900.

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF), was created by constitutional amendment to fund the acquisition and development of public recreation and development of public lands with proceeds from oil, gas, and mineral lease and royalty payments at state-owned lands.

Lake Idlewild Park/Access Site Development
Project Implementation Schedule
2007 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

Begin Engineering and Design	April 2008
Public Meeting	June 2008
Final Public Meeting	July 2008
Complete Engineering and Design	July 2008
Bidding	August 2008
Begin Construction	September 2008
Project Completion	September 2009

Lake Idlewild Park/Access Site Development
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

All of the following items were suggested by community members, through meetings and correspondence and have been included in the draft Idlewild Park/Access Site Development Plan.

1. Handicapped accessible fishing pier
2. Retain a natural shoreline, no removal of shoreline
3. Drinking water
4. Park benches and seating
5. A peaceful rest area for cyclists and walkers
6. Native wildflower public garden
7. Leave the trees for shade
8. No dredging
9. Good for animal life
10. Wheelchair accessible
11. Designated parking spaces
12. Public toilets
13. A safe area
14. Mandatory curfew
15. Make it a walking park
16. Work to be inspected by an inspector not paid by the contractor.
17. Do not overwhelm existing citizens with (extreme) development
18. Do not allow motorized boats...only canoes, kayaks, & rowboats
19. Keep it quiet. No boom boxes or PA systems
20. Everything should be handicapper accessible for folks with walkers and wheelchairs

Lake Idlewild Park/Launch Development Plan QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Will this site be barrier free and comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?

Yes, the site will meet ADA including providing accessible parking, an accessible vault toilet, a pier, and accessible routes between these elements.

2. Where does the funding come from?

Funding for the project comes from the Michigan State Waterways Fund and a grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Fund. The Waterways Fund collects money from marine fuel taxes, boat registrations, and user fees. The Trust Fund utilizes monies from mineral, oil and gas extraction revenues on state lands.

3. What is the time frame for completion of this project?

Engineering is anticipated for fall 2008 with construction to follow in 2009.

4. Who will operate and maintain this site?

The DNR, Parks and Recreation Division, which operates hundreds of boating access sites throughout the State, will operate and maintain this site.

5. Have threatened and endangered species been reviewed?

Yes, the Michigan Natural Features Inventory was reviewed and no known localities for rare or protected species were found on or in the immediate vicinity of the site.

6. How will the fish in Lake Idlewild be affected by this launch?

Due to the minimal size of this carry-down access site, and the smaller boats using this launch (canoes, kayaks, etc.), the anticipated effect is negligible.

7. What about the introduction of invasive species into Lake Idlewild from boats?

Any potential increase in invasive species risk from this site is negligible. The risk from invasive species has been present for some time already, due to existing public access sites on the lake where boat launching has occurred.

8. Is the DNR subject to the same permit requirements as private citizens, for the construction of boating access sites?

Yes, the DNR receives the same permit application screening, review, and assessment by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ).

9. Is there grant money available to construct a boating access site at another location?

There are grants available to local communities to provide for both engineering design services and construction of boating access sites on public land.

- 10. Why spend money on a project when the state is under a budget deficit?**
The money used to develop this site is not from general tax monies, but includes monies designated specifically for boating and park development.
- 11. Why didn't the DNR use the money to fix up Williams Island?**
Land must be owned by the agency applying for the grant. Yates Township did not apply for the grant funds.
- 12. I am concerned about safety in this area after dark. What can be done to discourage illegal activities, like drinking, and inappropriate behavior?**
Park hours can be set (dawn till dusk) and enforced by law enforcement agencies, including DNR Park and Recreation officers and DNR Conservation officers.
- 13. This is a natural area, why does this land need to be developed?** *Community residents have asked for public amenities that will encourage public visitations, economic development and discourage trespassing enroute to the lakeshore.*
- 14. Can we have a picnic pavilion?**
The intent for this area is for passive recreation and a small carry-down boat access. Construction of a public pavilion may draw large crowds, which is not preferred by the community at this location.
- 15. Can you dredge behind the Flamingo Club?**
This project does not include the area behind the Club and so the DNR would not be permitted to dredge there.
- 16. Can we have a boat washing area?**
This area is designed as a walk-in park with a small carry-down boat access. Designated parking spaces are for passenger vehicles only, not trailers.
- 17. Will there be a band shell/shelter for concerts?**
This area is intended as a small park with carry-down boat access and would not accommodate large numbers for concerts. Williams Island may be more suitable for this activity.
- 18. Will there be a children's playground/jungle gym?**
There is not one provided in the current project and it would be in conflict with local planning efforts
- 19. How will silt be controlled during and after construction?**
As a part of the site design and construction process, both temporary (silt fence, siltation curtain) and permanent (establishing turf) soil erosion and sediment control measures will be used.
- 20. Why build this launch on such a small and shallow lake?**
Lake Idlewild has a depth of approximately 22 feet; deep enough to support various types of boating use. The lake is also 105 acres in size, with over 3.7 miles of shoreline. Lake Idlewild is the fifth largest lake in a county with over 100 lakes.